

stop here to give instructions regarding certain work. I visited the camp and saw where my several platoons had camped while working with the Royal Engineers. From here we rode down the plank road nearly to Vlamertinghe and then cut across to the Vlamertinghe-Elverdinghe road, and stopped at the Culloden Division Royal Engineers Dump. This is behind the woods of the Vlamertinghe Chateau. At the edge of the woods there was a British Battery of two 9.2" guns, and they were firing all the time we were at the dump. The dump is right back of the Green Line (Vlamertinghe) of trenches, which are partially occupied by the British (at Mission Farm). Saw one man very industriously examining his clothes, especially the seams, for "kooties." All their habitations are pretty well under ground and it is a very great effort to keep free from the "kooties." While he is a nuisance, occasionally the "kootie" may become of real value. (I may have written this episode before.)

The Reward of the Kootie—A British officer was going through the front line trench, when he stooped over and reached back of his neck to pick off a "kootie" that was particularly irritating. Just as he got him off, a bullet passed immediately over his neck. He looked at the "kootie" and said: "Son, you have saved my life; but for your persistent biting I would have been standing upright and that bullet would have caught me in the head. I know of no way to reward you except to put you back where you were and let you keep on biting. This he did.

From Culloden we took the plank road around Vlamertinghe to avoid the shelling. The town is pretty well demolished. One tower of the church is still standing, and many of the house fronts, but practically every house has been hit one or more times by shells. Vlamertinghe is on the main road from Poperinghe to Ypres and on cross road. Consequently there is a good deal of hauling on the main road and the switch road, and the Germans shell the town regularly hoping to hit some of the transports. They are not perfectly regular in their time of shelling, so you may expect a shell any time. At night you know for sure they will be shelling every little while. Shell holes are common and one hit on the side of the road a short time before we passed, throwing the dirt on to the surface of the road. In this section we are getting beyond any cultivated fields and the country side is almost a waste, coming up in weeds (thistles).